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THE SITUATION IN CAMBODIA

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The present report on the situation in Cambodia is submitted to the General Assembly in pursuance of its resolution 45/3 of 15 October 1990.

2. During the period under review, I have pursued my efforts, within the framework of my good offices, to contribute to the achievement of a comprehensive political settlement of the problem. Accordingly, I and Under-Secretary-General Rafeeuddin Ahmed have maintained regular contacts with the parties and countries concerned, and have followed closely the various initiatives and diplomatic exchanges that have taken place over the past year. In addition, we have actively participated in the process of negotiations on a comprehensive political settlement agreement that would provide an enhanced role for the United Nations in Cambodia during a transitional period leading to the formation of a new Cambodian government following free and fair elections under United Nations auspices.

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3. In my last report to the General Assembly (A/45/605), I reported that the Vice-Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the permanent members of the Security Council had met a number of times to consider the Cambodia conflict. During the period under review, the Vice-Ministers of the five permanent members continued their consideration. They held another round of talks in New York on 15 and 16 October 1990, immediately following the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 45/3. On my behalf, Under-Secretaries-General Rafeeuddin Ahmed and Marrack Goulding participated in that meeting. In the final communiqué emanating from the meeting (A/45/671-S/21908), the five permanent members called upon the co-Presidents of the Paris Conference on Cambodia to make the necessary arrangements for the elaboration of a comprehensive political settlement agreement based upon the framework of 28 August 1990 formulated by the five permanent members 1/ and endorsed by the Cambodian parties, 2/ the Security Council 3/ and the General Assembly. 4/

4. On 9 and 10 November 1990, the co-Presidents of the Paris Conference convened a meeting at Jakarta of a working group to assist the co-Presidents in exploring various ideas regarding the elaboration of a draft settlement agreement. Mr. Ahmed participated in that meeting on my behalf. The meeting resulted in a general understanding on the structure and approach to be followed in elaborating the draft settlement agreement. 5/

5. Later that month, from 23 to 26 November, the representatives of the co-Presidents of the Conference met with the Vice-Ministers of the five permanent members to continue consideration of the elaboration of a draft settlement agreement. 6/ Mr. Ahmed also participated in this meeting. As a result of the meeting, the co-Presidents and the Five agreed on the text of the draft Agreements on a Comprehensive Political Settlement of the Cambodia Conflict. 7/ That text contained three main parts, namely: (1) a general agreement with detailed annexes covering the proposed mandate for the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC); the military arrangements during the transitional period; elections; the repatriation of Cambodian refugees and displaced persons; and principles for a new constitution; (2) an agreement covering international guarantees; and (3) a declaration regarding the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Cambodia.

6. From 21 to 23 December, the co-Presidents convened a meeting with the twelve members of the Supreme National Council of Cambodia (SNC) in order to present formally to them the 26 November text of the draft comprehensive political settlement agreement. Mr. Ahmed participated in this meeting. The meeting resulted in concurrence on most of the fundamental points of the draft agreements. 8/

7. At the beginning of February 1991, the co-Presidents of the Paris Conference on Cambodia visited Thailand and Viet Nam 9/ to undertake high-level consultations and to present formally the draft agreements to these two of Cambodia's neighbouring States, whose cooperation in the implementation of the settlement would be essential. Mr. Ahmed accompanied the co-Presidents on this mission.

8. On 22 April 1991, following disturbing reports of intensified fighting in Cambodia, I issued a joint appeal for a voluntary cease-fire in Cambodia, along with the co-Presidents of the Paris Conference on Cambodia. 10/ We strongly urged all parties in Cambodia to temporarily cease all hostilities as from the first of May, as a gesture of good faith creating a favorable environment for the success of a meeting of the co-Presidents and the members of SNC, which was to be convened at Jakarta the following month. The Cambodian parties subsequently informed me that they intended to respect this appeal.

9. In May, I dispatched my Military Adviser, Major-General Timothy Dibuama, to Cambodia for an on-the-spot review of the situation. General Dibuama was accompanied by a military officer dispatched by each of the co-Presidents. This team held discussions with representatives of the Cambodian parties and visited areas controlled by each of the parties.

10. In late May, three of the members of SNC were replaced, in accordance with the principle, agreed on 10 September 1990, 2/ that the composition of SNC had to be acceptable to all members. Accordingly, Messrs. Dith Munty, Im Chhun Lim and Sin Sen were to attend the forthcoming Jakarta meeting, replacing Messrs. Chem Snguon, Kong Som Ol and Sin Song.

11. The meeting in Jakarta between the co-Presidents and the members of SNC took place from 4 to 6 June 1991. Mr. Ahmed participated in the meeting on my behalf. At the meeting, discussions of the remaining differences on the draft agreements were pursued. At the same time, His Royal Highness Prince Norodom Sihanouk was in Jakarta, visiting that city as a guest of Indonesian President Suharto. During his visit, the Prince met with Mr. Hun Sen, and the question of the chairmanship of SNC was discussed.

12. In mid-June, with the agreement of all its members, Prince Sihanouk joined SNC. The Prince replaced Mr. Chau Sen Coosal, who had wished to retire. The Supreme National Council of Cambodia subsequently requested the Prince to convene and preside over its next meeting.

13. From 24 to 26 June, SNC met in Pattaya, Thailand, under the chairmanship of Prince Sihanouk. 11/ Mr. Ahmed and the representatives of the co-Presidents of the Paris Conference on Cambodia participated in that meeting. SNC, operating on the basis of consensus, took a number of important decisions. A significant result of the meeting was the unanimous decision to call for an immediate and unconditional voluntary cease-fire and a halt to receiving outside military assistance.

14. In order to pursue the discussions begun in Pattaya, Prince Sihanouk convened an informal meeting in Beijing on 16 and 17 July. 12/ Mr. Ahmed and the representatives of the co-Presidents of the Paris Conference on Cambodia participated in that meeting. At the meeting, SNC unanimously agreed to elect Prince Sihanouk as its president. SNC, through Prince Sihanouk, also requested that I dispatch a survey mission to Cambodia in connection with the decisions on military matters taken the previous month in Pattaya, and to undertake a comprehensive mine awareness programme in Cambodia in order to help to prevent further injury to life and limb.

15. On 17 and 18 July, the Vice-Ministers of the five permanent members and the representative of Indonesia, in his capacity as co-President of the Paris Conference on Cambodia, also met in Beijing. 13/ They considered the results obtained at the SNC meetings and held a meeting with Prince Sihanouk, as President of SNC, to exchange views on the situation and on the direction the negotiation process could be expected to take. Mr. Ahmed participated in the Beijing meeting on my behalf.

16. Following upon the requests of SNC and the recommendation 14/ of the co-Presidents of the Paris Conference on Cambodia and the five permanent members of the Security Council, I informed the President of the Security Council on 8 August that it was my intention to dispatch a survey mission to Cambodia. 15/. On 14 August, the President of the Security Council informed me that the Council agreed to the dispatch of this mission. 16/

17. The SNC held its second formal meeting in Pattaya, from 26 to 29 August. Mr. Ahmed and the representatives of the co-Presidents of the Paris Conference on Cambodia participated in the meeting. In Pattaya, SNC considered the draft settlement agreements of 26 November 1990, and achieved significant progress in finding compromise solutions to most of the outstanding difficulties, including, in particular, the question of the military arrangements during the transitional period. 17/ SNC, through Prince Sihanouk, also requested me to send a number of military observers to Cambodia, and to begin rehabilitation assistance for Cambodia as soon as possible.

18. On 29 and 30 August, the Vice-Ministers of the permanent members of the Security Council and Indonesia also met in Pattaya. 18/ The progress made by SNC, especially with respect to military matters, was considered. On 30 August, the first joint meeting of the co-Presidents, the five permanent members and SNC was held. Mr. Ahmed participated in both of these meetings.

19. On 19 September, Prince Sihanouk and other members of SNC met informally with the representatives of the co-Presidents of the Paris Conference on Cambodia and with Mr. Ahmed in New York. Prince Sihanouk indicated that SNC had reached agreement on the issue of the electoral system to be used for the elections to be organized and conducted by the United Nations in Cambodia as part of the settlement agreement.

20. On 20 and 21 September, the Vice-Ministers of the five permanent members and the representative of the Indonesian co-President met in New York to take stock of the situation. 19/ On 20 September, they held their second joint meeting with members of SNC, at which Prince Sihanouk announced that SNC had reached agreement on the question of the decision-making process during the transitional period. Mr. Ahmed participated in these meetings.

21. On 21 September, the co-Presidents of the Paris Conference on Cambodia convened in New York an informal meeting of the Coordination Committee. Following this meeting, Mr. Ahmed assisted the representatives of the co-Presidents in reviewing and revising the 26 November 1990 draft text in order to reflect the agreements reached during the preceding 10 months. The revised text was presented to SNC on 27 September, at another informal meeting held with the co-Presidents' representatives and Mr. Ahmed. Subsequently, the co-Presidents made the revised text available to the other States participating in the Conference.

22. On 16 October, following my report to the Security Council, 20/ the Council adopted resolution 717 (1991) calling for the deployment, immediately after the signature of the comprehensive settlement agreements, of the United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia, to exercise good offices and liaison functions during the period preceding the establishment of UNTAC.

23. On 23 October, the Agreements on a Comprehensive Political Settlement of the Cambodia Conflict were signed in Paris at the final meeting of the Conference. This act marked the beginning of the transitional period in Cambodia, which will continue until the formation of a new Cambodian

Government following free and fair elections, in accordance with the settlement agreement. The signature ceremony was preceded by a meeting of the Coordination Committee, which was reconvened on 21 October for a final review of the settlement agreement texts.

24. On 31 October, the Security Council adopted resolution 718 (1991), expressing its full support for the agreements signed in Paris, and requesting the preparation of a detailed plan of implementation.

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25. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 43/19, I continued and strengthened my efforts in coordinating humanitarian relief assistance to the Cambodian people during 1991. My Special Representative, Mr. S. A. M. S. Kibria, maintained close contact with the donor community and other interested parties, including international and non-governmental organizations, informing them of programme needs and of developments in the humanitarian field. He also established a specific inter-agency coordinating mechanism within Cambodia for this purpose.

26. The advent of intensified military activity in western Cambodia during the first part of 1991, as well as deteriorating conditions in the health and agricultural sectors, led to renewed movement of large numbers of people across the Thai/Cambodian border to the camps supported by the United Nations Border Relief Operation (UNBRO) in Thailand. Arrival rates of about 2,000 people per week caused the border camp population to swell from some 290,000 at the end of 1990 to the current level of 340,000. In addition, 18,000 Khmer refugees in Khao-I-Dang camp and elsewhere remained under the care of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

27. I am pleased to confirm that, as a result of the generosity of the donor community throughout the year, the cash and food requirements for assistance programmes to these border populations have been met for the remainder of this year. It will, however, continue to be necessary to provide food and other assistance to much of the border population, until that population can be repatriated in a safe and orderly manner in accordance with the provisions of the Paris Agreements.

28. The security situation along the border area has deteriorated in recent months and remains a source of concern. Now that a cease-fire is in effect, idle military elements previously engaged in activity inside Cambodia appear to be the primary cause for increased acts of banditry affecting all those who work and live along the border. The President of SNC and the Royal Thai Government have taken some positive steps towards improving security along the border.

29. In July 1989, I designated UNHCR as the lead agency to carry out the repatriation of the border population following the conclusion of a comprehensive political settlement. In order to ensure that measures taken in preparation for repatriation are carried out in an effective and well-

coordinated manner, using all available resources, UNHCR assumed on 1 November 1991 the management and administrative support for UNBRO, which had been provided by the United Nations Development Programme since 1988. Registration programmes aimed at identifying target areas within Cambodia for return of the camp populations are ongoing, as is the process of identifying available land within the country. Cognizant of the need for the early resettlement of the returnees and of the large size of the population involved, detailed preparations are necessary in order to ensure that the repatriation is carried out in conditions of safety and dignity. Until these preparations are completed, I would call upon all parties to desist from attempting to move any portion of the border population back to Cambodia prematurely.

30. Within Cambodia, humanitarian assistance continued to be provided by the United Nations, other international organizations and voluntary agencies. In July of this year, taking advantage of the cessation of military activity following an agreed cease-fire, the International Committee of the Red Cross sent ambulances across the Poipet bridge connecting Thailand and Cambodia, in what amounted to the first such official border crossing since 1975. Shortly after, the United Nations used this route for the first time to transport emergency relief supplies from Bangkok to Phnom Penh. Additional deliveries of relief assistance, including several thousand tons of rice from the World Food Programme, are now being transported into Cambodia by this route on an ongoing basis.

31. Recent reports regarding the extensive damage caused by widespread flooding in Cambodia in August and September of this year are cause for concern and have been the focus of a combined emergency relief effort involving Governments, United Nations agencies and voluntary organizations. Extensive damage to agricultural land and to the country's infrastructure has been reported. The United Nations Disaster Relief Organization responded to the request from SNC for emergency flood relief assistance by circulating an appeal for aid to the international community, to which several Governments and United Nations agencies have replied. The flood waters have now receded, but the destruction of agricultural production remains a pressing concern, as does the damage to roads, railways and bridges.

32. United Nations agencies and voluntary organizations are also providing relief assistance to persons within Cambodia who have been compelled to leave their homes and villages during the past year to escape the effects of war. In April 1991, a comprehensive report detailing the needs of this population of internally-displaced persons was prepared by an informal inter-agency working group in Phnom Penh and presented to donor Governments. The provision of relief assistance across nine sectors at a total cost of some $US 12 million was recommended, but the contributions received from Governments have remained limited. I wish to urge the donor community to contribute to this programme to ensure that the most basic needs of internally-displaced Cambodians, including reintegration assistance, are met in the coming months.

33. I wish to reiterate my deep appreciation to the international community for the support extended to the Cambodian humanitarian assistance programmes over the years and to express the hope that this support will continue and will increase as we approach the final phase of this chapter in Cambodia's recent history. I would also like to pay tribute to those United Nations and other international agencies and non-governmental organizations that have worked so tirelessly throughout the years for and on behalf of the Cambodian people. I must also express my appreciation to the Royal Thai Government for the cooperation and assistance which they have extended to the United Nations in fulfilling its responsibilities.

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34. It was with great personal satisfaction that I witnessed the conclusion of the Agreements on a Comprehensive Political Settlement of the Cambodia Conflict in Paris on 23 October 1991. These Agreements were unanimously approved by Security Council resolution 718 (1991) of 31 October, which paved the way for the most ambitious and complex operation in the history of the United Nations.

35. It is gratifying that the international community and the Cambodians themselves have decided to entrust to the United Nations wide-ranging responsibilities in the implementation of the settlement agreements. I am convinced that the Organization will do its utmost to fulfil these responsibilities as efficiently as possible. I wish to stress, however, that the Organization will only be able to undertake the tasks foreseen in the settlement agreements if it is provided, in a timely and assured manner, with the substantial human and financial resources that will be required. Innovative procedures may have to be devised in this connection. Moreover, the success of the proposed United Nations operation will depend on the strict and faithful compliance, by all the parties concerned, with the terms of the Paris Agreements, and on their full and continuing cooperation throughout the transitional period.

36. The signature of the Paris accords has created an historic opportunity for a genuine national reconciliation, the holding of free and fair elections and the establishment of a durable peace in Cambodia. I earnestly hope that all those concerned will seize this opportunity, so as to enable the Cambodian people to put their tragic past behind them and to usher in a new era of peace, stability and cooperation in South-East Asia.

Notes

1/ The Framework for a Comprehensive Political Settlement of the Cambodia Conflict is contained in document A/45/472-S/21689.

2/ See the Jakarta communiqué of 10 September 1990, contained in document A/45/490-S/21732.

3/ Security Council resolution 668 (1990).

Notes (continued)

4/ General Assembly resolution 45/3 of 15 October 1990.

5/ The final communiqué of the Jakarta meeting is contained in document A/45/719-S/21940.

6/ The final communiqué of the November Paris meeting is contained in document A/45/829-S/21985.

7/ The draft Agreements on a Comprehensive Political Settlement of the Cambodia Conflict are contained in document A/46/61-S/22059.

8/ The final communiqué of the December meeting is contained in document A/46/61-S/22059.

9/ The joint statement of the co-Presidents of the Paris Conference on Cambodia and the Foreign Minister of Viet Nam is contained in document A/46/112-S/22344.

10/ The text of the joint appeal is contained in document A/46/161-S/22552.

11/ The final communiqué of the Pattaya meeting of SNC is contained in document A/46/271-S/22740.

12/ The final communiqué of the Beijing meeting of SNC is contained in document A/46/310-S/22808.

13/ The final communiqué of the Beijing meeting of the Vice-Ministers and Indonesia is contained in document A/46/340-S/22889.

14/ See document A/46/340-S/22889.

15/ S/22945.

16/ S/22946.

17/ The final communiqué of the August meeting of SNC in Pattaya is contained in document A/46/494-S/23066.

18/ The final communiqué of the August Pattaya meeting of the Five and Indonesia is contained in document A/46/418-S/23011.

19/ The final communiqué of the New York meeting is contained in document A/46/508-S/23087.

20/ S/23097 and Add.1.